

Where can I use my Iowa EBT card? Use it anywhere in Iowa and in other states at places that are authorized by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to take “Food Stamps”. Look for a sign that says “**We Accept Food Stamp Benefits**” or a “**Quest™**” sign that has a grocery bag with “Food Stamps” printed on it. You can ask if you can use your Iowa EBT Card if you do not see a sign.



You can use your Iowa EBT card lots of places. Use it at stores that sell food, bakery outlets, meat markets, convenience stores, farmer’s markets, roadside vendors, route sales that sell food to you at home, congregate meal sites, meals on wheels, and any other place that takes “Food Stamps”.

How do I use my Iowa EBT card? Use it at the Point of Sale (POS) machine in the checkout lane. It is easy to use your Iowa EBT card!

If you are not sure what to do, ask for help. Lots of people need help to work a POS machine. Asking for help does not single you out as using food assistance.

- ✓ Some stores want you to separate the items you want to buy with food assistance from the items you have to pay for with cash.
- ✓ The cashier totals your food purchase.
- ✓ Swipe your Iowa EBT card through the card reader on the POS machine.
- ✓ Enter the four numbers that is your PIN on the POS number pad.
- ✓ Take your receipt.

Keep your receipts. Your most recent POS receipt tells you how much you have left in your food account. Receipts are your proof if there ever is a problem with your account.

You don’t have to use all of your food assistance right away. You can save for a special day or for when you really need it the most.

Food assistance stays in your account for 365 days after you last used some from your account.

When shopping with food assistance,

- ✓ You **can use** food assistance to buy all types of foods that are sold to be eaten at home - including snack foods, candy, ice, nonalcoholic beverages, soft drinks and their bottle deposits. You also can buy plants and seeds to grow food.
- ✓ You **cannot use** food assistance to buy foods that are already hot or meant to be eaten in the store. You also cannot buy vitamins, medicines, or any other nonfood items with food assistance.
- ✓ You do not pay tax on anything you buy with your food assistance.
- ✓ If you want to buy more than you have in your food account, you can pay for part of your purchase with cash and part with your Iowa EBT card. Just tell the cashier that you want to do this.
- ✓ If the store’s POS equipment doesn’t work, ask if you can use a “manual voucher”. This is similar to writing a check on your food account. Stores that will let you use a manual voucher will have them on hand.

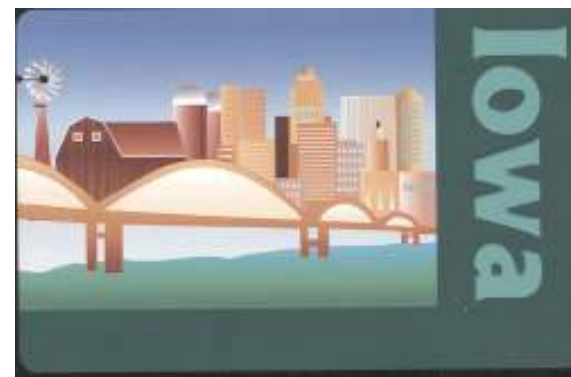
If a store charges you the wrong price for an item, ask for a credit to your account for the difference.

If you return an item to the store, the cost of the item is put back in your account. You cannot get cash as a refund.

Your right to equal treatment – “This is an equal opportunity program. If you believe that you have been the victim of discrimination in your efforts to receive food assistance benefits because of your race, color, national origin, age sex, disability, religious belief, or political beliefs, write immediately to the Administration, Food and Nutrition Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

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The Food Assistance Program through Electronic Benefit Transfer – EBT –



The EBT Card

Si no puede leer este forma en ingles, llame a su trabajadora de food assistance para obtener una forma en español.

Food assistance is a nutritional support program – It is not welfare! “Food Assistance” is Iowa’s name for the “Food Stamp Program”.

There is enough food assistance to help everyone who qualifies! Food assistance helps people who have low income and few resources to buy the food they need. It is for working people, people on fixed income, people who have no income, single people, families, young, middle aged, elderly, and disabled people, who meet the program requirements.

- ✓ Food assistance is free. You never have to pay back any food assistance that you are eligible for.
- ✓ People can buy or own a home, and people can have cars and be eligible for food assistance.
- ✓ Many legal aliens can get food assistance. Getting it does not stop a person from becoming a Legal Permanent Resident or a citizen.

Children born in the U.S. can be eligible for food assistance, even if their parents or other persons in their home are not legal aliens. You can apply just for the U.S. citizen children, and not the others.

To apply for food assistance, contact your local Department of Human Services office.

Using food assistance is private. Using an EBT food account is much like using a bank account. Like using a bank account, you will use your own Iowa EBT card at the store to buy food with the assistance that is in your account.

When approved for food assistance,

- ✓ The state sets up an EBT food account for you,
- ✓ You get a notice in the mail to tell you how much food assistance was deposited in your food account, and
- ✓ You get an Iowa EBT card in the mail.

What is EBT? EBT stands for Electronic Benefit Transfer. The state uses a computer to transfer food assistance from the federal government to individual food accounts.

- ✓ It does not cost you anything to get or to use your food account.
- ✓ The exact amount of your food purchase is taken out of your EBT food account. You cannot get change or cash back from your account.
- ✓ The Iowa EBT card does not work at ATMs. It only will work at a POS machine.
- ✓ If you get food assistance on a monthly schedule, it is put in your account on the same date each month, even if that day is a weekend or a holiday.
- ✓ Benefits left in your food account at the end of the month stay there until you use them. They are added to any new benefits you get.
- ✓ Your Iowa EBT card and food account still works even if your food assistance case is canceled, as long as you have benefits in your account.
- ✓ You use your same Iowa EBT card every month that you get food assistance.

PIN means Personal Identification Number.

A PIN is four numbers you enter on a POS number pad when you use your Iowa EBT card.

- ✓ You decide what your PIN is. Pick four numbers that you can remember, but no one else can guess.
- ✓ You call the EBT Customer Service phone number and follow instructions to set your PIN.
- ✓ Keep your PIN secret. Don’t write your PIN on your Iowa EBT card.
- ✓ Don’t let anyone see you enter your PIN at the POS machine.

Remember your PIN. If you enter your PIN wrong at the POS machine four times in a row, you can’t use your account until the next day.

Can someone else use my food account to do my shopping for me? If you have a person you trust that you want to have shop for you, you can ask your DHS worker to give that person an Iowa EBT card on your food account.

Remember before you give someone an Iowa EBT card on your food account, the person you give a card to can use ALL of the food assistance in your account.

DHS will NOT replace any food assistance that is used from your EBT food account.

EBT Customer Service Number: 1-800-359-5802

You must use a touch-tone phone when you call customer service. When you call, you need the last four numbers of your Social Security Number, your birth date, and your Iowa EBT card number - the raised set of numbers on the front of your card.

EBT customer service is a free call, available 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Call the EBT customer service number to:

- ✓ Choose your PIN when you get your first Iowa EBT card.
- ✓ Change your PIN if someone finds out what your PIN is, **or** if you forget the numbers you chose for your PIN.
- ✓ Find out how much is in your account.
- ✓ Hear your last 10 transactions.
- ✓ Report if there is a problem with your account.
- ✓ Ask a question about using your Iowa EBT card.
- ✓ Report if your card is lost, stolen or damaged.